

Message Text

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63

ORIGIN EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 CU-04 (ISO) R

DRAFTED BY EA/K:DLRANARD:LM

APPROVED BY EA/K:DLRANARD

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P 182240Z JUN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 130389

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, PINT, KS, US

SUBJECT: RETURN OF GREGORY HENDERSON COLLECTION DEMANDED

REF: SEOUL 3915

1. HENDERSON TELEPHONED RANARD TODAY AT APPROXIMATELY SAME TIME REFTEL BEING REVIEWED IN DEPARTMENT TO VOLUNTEER HIS SIDE OF STORY IN CONNECTION WITH CHARGES BROUGHT BY KOREAN CULTURAL RELICS PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION. HE SAID THAT HIS COLLECTION OF CERAMICS WAS PROCURED LEGALLY THROUGH OPEN PURCHASE AND THAT FACT HE HAD THIS COLLECTION WAS KNOWN TO ALL. IN FACT, HE HAD EXHIBITED ITEMS IN U.S. AND FOR SUCH PURPOSE HAD APPARENTLY PRINTED CATALOGUE (PRESUMABLY PICTORIAL BOOKLET REFERRED TO IN REFTEL). PRIOR TO LEAVING KOREA IN 1963 HE HAD CONSULTED KIM CHAE HWAN, THEN DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, AND HAD TOLD KIM THAT IF THERE WERE ANY PIECES REGARDED AS NATIONAL TREASURES HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SELL THEM TO MUSEUM AT SAME PRICE HE HAD PAID. ACCORDING TO HENDERSON, KIM NEVER EXPRESSED ANY INTEREST IN HIS OFFER.

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2. HENDERSON SAID HIS COLLECTION WAS PACKED BY EMBASSY

ALONG WITH OTHER HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS AT TIME WHEN HE WAS OUT OF COUNTRY IN 1963, AND HE REASONS THAT EMBASSY THUS RESPONSIBLE FOR SEEING TO IT THAT EXPORT WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS IN EFFECT IN KOREA AT THAT TIME. HENDERSON CLAIMED NOT TO BE AWARE OF 1962 LAW. HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT HE HAD NOT PURCHASED ANY PIECES WHICH WERE LISTED AS NATIONAL TREASURES. HE BELIEVES IT CLEAR HE BEING SINGLED OUT BECAUSE OF HIS POLITICAL CRITICISM OF PARK GOVERNMENT.

3. RANARD ASKED HENDERSON TO SEND LETTER TO DEPARTMENT STATING HIS CASE AND ALSO INDICATED HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING MATTER WITH DEPARTMENT LAWYERS. HENDERSON ASKED THAT HIS POSITION BE COMMUNICATED TO THE EMBASSY SO THAT IT COULD BE MADE KNOWN TO KOREAN AUTHORITIES INVOLVED.

4. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS ON LEGAL ASPECTS. BROWN

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